[Method and system for automated data manipulation in an electronic spreadsheet program or the like.]

Abstract of Disclosure

An efficient method and system, which uses a Key Identifier (Key-ID), Region Identifier (Region-ID) and Cell Collection Expression (CCE) to establish a spreadsheet software base for automated data manipulation within an electronic spreadsheet program or the like. A Key-ID is either part of or the entire content of a cell or group of cells drawn from an existing spreadsheet database or inserted into the database by manual prior art spreadsheet data operations or through simple programming. The purpose of the Key-ID is to organize and separate spreadsheet data into manageable data sets of similar construct. The Region-ID is used to specify the region containing the Key-ID and is defined using the Row or Column Identifier (RC-ID) and optional Identifiers-Sheet Identifier, File Identifier, Directory Identifier. The CCE represents or identifies the cell(s) containing the Key-ID within a region of interest specified by the Region-ID and is composed of CCE elements. Each CCE element is a single cell location containing the Key-ID within a manageable data set and is used as a reference point for data manipulation. By assigning a standard coordinate system to each data set with the CCE element as the origin (0,0), the location of the target cells (source and/or destination cells), which must be identified in any spreadsheet data operation, can be specified based on their relative location to the origin in each data set. As each data set can be identified using a single CCE, the fixed relative location of the target cells to the CCE element will allow any spreadsheet data operation to be performed on every data set within the database systematically and automatically by combining the invention with existing spreadsheet capability.

Figures